



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
www.rva.gov/office-city-clerk

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

12:00 PM

Library of Virginia, Conference Room - 1st Floor,
800 E. Broad Street,
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Legislative Summit

Councilmembers Present

The Honorable Michael Jones, President
The Honorable Kristen Nye, Vice President
The Honorable Andreas Addison
The Honorable Katherine Jordan
The Honorable Ann-Frances Lambert
The Honorable Stephanie Lynch
The Honorable Cynthia Newbille

Absent

The Honorable Ellen Robertson
The Honorable Reva Trammell

Others in Attendance

Maggie Anderson, Chief of Staff for the Honorable Mayor Levar Stoney
The Honorable Lamont Bagby, Virginia Senator, 14th Voter District
The Honorable Betsy Carr, Virginia House of Delegates Representative, 78th Voter District
Kathy Burcher, Advantus Strategies, Council Lobbyist
The Honorable Rae Cousins, Virginia House of Delegates Representative-Elect, 79th Voter District
Suzette Denslow, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
Laura Drewry, City Attorney
LaTasha Holmes, Council Chief of Staff
Jason Kamras, Richmond Public Schools Superintendent
Candice Reid, City Clerk
Tabrica Rentz, Deputy City Attorney
Lincoln Saunders, Chief Administrative Officer
Matthew Stanley, Director of Advocacy and Outreach for Richmond Public Schools
RJ Warren, Deputy City Clerk

At 12:17 p.m., President Michael Jones welcomed attendees, and he introduced individuals participating in the legislative summit.

A copy of the material provided has been filed.

[CD.2023.367](#) Legislative Summit Documents

Councilor Stephanie Lynch welcomed attendees, and she summarized the city's legislative agenda. Councilor Lynch stated that the current membership composition of the Virginia General Assembly favored the city's legislative requests, and she thanked the Richmond delegation to the Virginia General Assembly for attending the legislative summit.

Suzette Denslow, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, informed attendees that the city and lobbying entities, Advantus Strategies and the Broad Street Group, would be advocating on behalf of the city's legislative agenda with the General Assembly of Virginia.

Chief Administrative Officer Lincoln Saunders stated that the city's main lobbying efforts would address funding the city's combined sewer overflow (CSO) improvements, affordable housing improvements, and gun safety.

Kathy Burcher, Advantus Strategies Senior Director, Government Relations, provided attendees with a presentation that outlined the upcoming 2024 General Assembly of Virginia session schedule, and she addressed how the city's lobbyists would advocate for the city's legislative agenda during the General Assembly session. Ms. Burcher discussed strategy and possible outcomes related to the city's legislative program and priorities. Ms. Burcher also provided more information regarding RES. 2023-R057, and the city's request for certain changes to the Charter of the City of Richmond.

Senator Lamont Bagby inquired about the reasoning for requested City Charter changes. Senator Bagby stated it was critical that the Richmond delegation understand the city's objectives and requests to ensure support amongst state legislators.

Councilor Lynch provided a summary of RES. 2023-R057, and the city's requested changes to the City Charter.

Councilor Andreas Addison provided additional information regarding the request to allow Council to provide members with additional compensation for participating in standing committee or other meetings of the Council, for which such members are engaged in the duties of the Council. Councilor Addison stated that increased compensation was important to help members prioritize responsibilities.

Senator Bagby noted his support, but he suggested that Council rotate member assignments to committees, boards, and commissions to ensure members have an equitable share of compensation.

Kathy Burcher continued discussing Council's legislative priorities, and she provided more details on Council's legislative requests to provide tax relief to longtime city residents that are tax burdened and the development of more affordable housing. Ms. Burcher also provided more information regarding Council's policy statements listed in Council's legislative program for the 2024 General Assembly.

Delegate-Elect Rae Cousins stated that she believed Council's legislative requests and policy statements aligned with the concerns of her constituents.

Councilor Addison stated that it was important that the city and its lobbyists work with the Virginia First Cities Coalition and Virginia Municipal League regarding legislative requests that would benefit other cities and localities in the Commonwealth.

Councilor Lynch inquired about state funding and the financial needs of Richmond Public Schools (RPS).

RPS Superintendent Jason Kamras addressed the impact of the state's local composite index (LCI) on state funding for schools, and stated that the LCI would decrease the state's required contribution to RPS funding.

Matthew Stanley, Director of Advocacy and Outreach for RPS, provided additional information regarding the impact of the state's LCI on RPS funding. Mr. Stanley stated that RPS will receive additional funding from the state to assist at-risk students, but he noted that the additional funding would not balance the loss of state funds due to LCI requirements.

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Lincoln Saunders informed attendees that the city contributes more funds to RPS in the city budget than is required by the LCI. CAO Saunders stated that the LCI adjustment lowers the amount of required funding received from the state.

Senator Bagby stated that it would be difficult for the Richmond delegation to address the LCI funding formula, and he suggested the city advocate for more funding through programs similar to the state's at-risk student policy.

CAO Saunders stated that the city, the Richmond delegation, and lobbyists should work to address the payment in lieu of property taxes (PILOT) the city receives from the Commonwealth regarding state-owned property in the city. CAO Saunders also stated that any increases to the PILOT payment the city receives could offset the loss in state school funding.

Councilor Cynthia Newbille stated it was important that the city and its partners advocate to address LCI funding, at-risk student funding, and PILOT funding to ensure the city receives an equitable share of school funding.

President Michael Jones thanked attendees for their involvement and advocacy on behalf of the city's legislative priorities.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

CITY CLERK